

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 049 554

24

EA 003 478

AUTHOR Langmeyer, Daniel; And Others
 TITLE Theory To Guide Organizational Training in Schools.
 INSTITUTION Oregon Univ., Eugene. Center for Advanced Study of Educational Administration.
 SPONS AGENCY National Center for Educational Research and Development (DHEW/CE), Washington, D.C.
 REPORT NO Project-3001; TR-3
 BUREAU NO BR-5-0217
 PUE DATE Oct 69
 CONTRACT OEC-4-10-163
 NOTE 14p.
 AVAILABLE FROM CASEA Editor, Center for the Advanced Study of Educational Administration, University of Oregon, Eugene 97403 (\$1.00)

EDRS PRICE EDRS Price MF-\$0.65 HC-\$3.29
 DESCRIPTORS Communication (Thought Transfer), *Communication Skills, Consultants, *Group Dynamics, Group Relations, Organization, *Organizational Change, *School Personnel, Sensitivity Training, *T Groups

ABSTRACT

Organizational training aims at increasing the problem-solving effectiveness of groups by harnessing emotional states and enabling participants to function efficiently as working components of a task-oriented body. A three-step sequence for using organizational training in schools would: (1) improve communication skills of personnel, (2) change behavioral expectations, and (3) change organizational structures. Communications consultants are currently being employed in some schools to help facilitate problemsolving through organizational training. (Author/RA)

ED049554

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE
PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS
STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION
POSITION OR POLICY.

Technical
Report
No. 3

Theory To Guide Organizational Training in Schools

Richard A. Schmuck
Philip J. Runkel, and Daniel Langmeyer

EA 003 478

July, 1970

Center for the Advanced Study of Educational Administration

ED049554

**Theory to Guide
Organizational Training
in Schools**

**Daniel Langmeyer
Richard A. Schmuck
Philip J. Runkel**

Bureau No. 5-0217, Project No. 3001

Contract No. 4-10-163

Funding Authority: Cooperative Research Act

1st Printing: October, 1969

2nd Printing: July, 1970

The research reported herein was conducted as part of the research and development program of the Center for the Advanced Study of Educational Administration, a national research and development center supported in part by funds from the United States Office of Education, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. The opinions expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the Office of Education and no official endorsement by the Office of Education should be inferred.

\$1.00

Center for the Advanced Study of Educational Administration
University of Oregon Eugene, Oregon

INTRODUCTION

A recent review of research on planned organizational change in industry by Campbell and Dunnette (1968) pointed out that the assumption that T-group training (or sensitivity training) is useful for organizations must necessarily rest on shaky ground since it has been neither confirmed nor disconfirmed. They argued that usefulness for organizations is not necessarily the same as usefulness for individuals. Although several studies have indicated that T-group training does change individuals (Harrison, 1966; Miles, 1965; Schutz and Allen, 1966), none has shown that organizational change is brought about by training individuals away from their organization in T-groups. Some glimmer of hope that T-group training can be useful to an organization is found in a study by Kuriloff and Atkins (1967); but even there, all T-group members were drawn from the same organization.

In this paper we wish to differentiate between the goals of personal development typical in the T-group and the goals of organizational development that organizational training is designed to achieve. T-groups generally aim at helping individuals to understand themselves better, to be able to differentiate their interpersonal worlds more completely, and to carry out their interpersonal relationships with openness, tact, and skill. In short, learning the cognitions, attitudes, and skills of constructive openness can be said to be the primary goals of T-group training.

Organizational training, on the other hand, remains fixed on organizational roles and norms and their interrelationships. It represents an amalgamation of theory from group dynamics on the one hand (e.g., Bradford et al., 1964; and Schein and Bennis, 1965) and General Systems theory on the other (e.g., Buckley, 1967). Although organizational training makes use of the organization as its own laboratory, laboratory groups are used in ways different from sensitivity training or the T-group. The targets of organizational training are the membership as a whole and as subgroups. The training seeks to increase the effectiveness of groups as task-oriented entities and tries to lead participants to function more effectively as components of working bodies carrying out specific tasks in that particular job setting. Nevertheless, organizational life is fraught with its own array of emotions--a point to which we shall return later. An experience in T-groups is an important preparation, even a vital one, for the organizational trainer himself. We do not believe, however, that the T-group in itself is a vital tool for refurbishing organizational life; perhaps it isn't even an important one. The argument will become clear as we go along.

In this paper we shall limit our discussion to one subclass of organization, namely, schools. We present a theoretical basis for organizational development that we have found helpful in our own planning and analysis.

SCHOOL ORGANIZATIONS

as systems

School organizations are open, living systems, contained within, but constantly influencing and being influenced by the environment. They are complex social systems stabilized by role expectations and interpersonal norms. Individuals within a faculty behave predictably largely because of their adherence to shared expectations for what is appropriate in the school. Norms are compelling stabilizers because individuals in the school monitor one another's behaviors. It is the strength of this sharedness that makes a school organization so resistant to modification; but at the same time, it offers a tool for planned change. If organizational change in the school is to be viable and stable, changes in interpersonal expectations must be shared so that each person knows that his colleagues have changed their expectations in the same way that he has changed his own.

Educational organizations, therefore, are more simply the sum total of their individual members and curriculum materials. The total staff has characteristics quite different from those of its individual members. These we refer to as the school's systemic characteristics. From this point of view, effective management of schools is evidenced when greater production occurs than would be expected from a simple summing up of individual resources. As an open system, an organization's efficiency is measured by how completely resources are used in developing its products.

Four postulates are basic to our theory of school organizations.

1. Schools are made up of basic units referred to as components. Components most prominent for our analysis are the people and the curriculum. These components are organized into subsystems by means of the communication of information, by decision-making, job allocation, and program evaluation. Some important subsystems take the form of classrooms, departmental groups, curriculum committees, building groups, and administrative cabinets in the school district.
2. Schools are goal-directed. In general, they aim at preparing young people for productive adulthood in a complex, industrialized, society. The subsystems are organized presumably to achieve system's goals and they are organized with functional differences. For example, the superintendent's administrative committee may forecast about the future in order to accommodate changing times; classroom teachers may diagnose the learning needs of their students and curriculum committees may scan the outside world for new ideas and practices.
3. Schools display some degrees of openness and adaptability--although at times we feel not enough. But to some degree, schools are always changing. They react to environmental influences with certain feedback mechanisms. Locations in the school system that manifest openness to the outside environment are administrative cabinets in relation to the school board,

curriculum committees in relation to outside innovations, and teachers' professional organizations in relation to other similar organizations in the environment. Schools are constantly mapping part of their environmental variety into their internal organization. Strain within schools occurs when one subsystem (such as the curriculum division) brings into the school district certain new practices and another subsystem (such as a school-building staff) is mostly closed to the new practices.

4. Schools are constituted with many resources within their subsystems and components that at any one time are not being used. This repertoire for adaptation can be referred to as a variety pool. While the variety pool will inevitably include a number of irrelevant or even deleterious processes in relation to its goals, it is necessary, if a school system is to be effectively adaptive, for the system to seek, support, and facilitate the emergence of whatever resources exist for maximizing its educative functions.

These four postulates help us to move toward an orientation for organizational training in schools. First, interventions will be more efficient if they deal with subsystems and not just randomly selected components. Further, the total school takes its shape from the ways the functional subsystems connect their efforts to one another; for this reason, organizational training should focus, too, on relationships within and between subsystems. Second, interventions should confront the school with discrepancies between goal-striving and actual goal-achievement. Since the goals of a school district lie in its interaction with its environment, an intervention in a school system should be designed to affect the interresponsiveness of the system with its environment. Third, interventions should be aimed at making every subsystem in the school more open to the influences of every other subsystem. From our point of view, increased openness is especially appropriate in relationships between subsystems, on the one hand, that are closer to the boundaries of the whole system such as the curriculum division and the subsystems, on the other hand, that are closer to the inner core of the system such as classrooms.

Finally, interventions should help the school define its variety pool by identifying system-wide resources and help the school build communication connections between components and subsystems. In this way, interventions often lead to the creation of new or ad hoc subsystems that exist only long enough to mobilize resources for certain isolated and non-regular problems. Interventions quite often lead to formation of problem-solving groups that did not exist in the formal structure of the school before the intervention. If school organizations are to be truly adaptive, they must be able to form new subsystems, change them, or dispose of them as needed.

as adaptive systems

Schools are not static. They have multiple and differentiated processes that are constantly in motion. One essential process for adaptation concerns the feedback that changes modes of interaction of the school with its environment so as to maintain goal-directedness. Every time the feedback process results in a new strategy for equilibration, the school has altered its structure by that much and is therefore a modified organization. Consequently, every complex school or district is not merely static, not merely equilibrating, not merely homeostatic, but inherently structure-changing. This inexorable process has been referred to as morphogenesis by Buckley (1967). Organizational training strives to help schools achieve more capability for rapidly and efficiently bringing about morphogenesis.

The key to effective morphogenesis lies in the school's capacity to do things in new ways--in its variety pool. The need for a varied pool reminds us that a school cannot be morphogenic or "self-renewing" if its repertoire of responses to environmental stress is impoverished. If the possible ways of coping with challenge are too limited, then a violent discontinuity may be necessary if the larger system--the district, the community, or the state--is to adapt to a mismatch it finds existing between the real environment and the "map" inside the school. One or more faculty may be discharged, a portion of the students may be moved to another school, the drop-out rate may increase markedly, the school

may be closed down for some period, athletics and music may be dropped from the curriculum, parents may go to the school en masse to press their demands, students may riot, etc.

A variety pool is a distribution of readiness for varieties of action. It includes sets of expectations about others, attitudes toward risk-taking, and latent behavioral skills for new ways of teaching. It is not a list of ideas residing in a filing cabinet. When relations among persons have a significant potential for producing new action-patterns, they will erupt now and again in the form of "deviant behavior." Nonetheless, the notion of a variety pool urges to ask what potentialities for process exist in the school beyond the official, current, formal processes. The simplest way to identify such potentialities for variety is to look for so-called deviant behavior in the school. In one school, a common deviant behavior may be "goofing-off" or talking cynically about others. In another, it might be bootlegging topics or teaching methods not prescribed in the official manuals. In a third, it may be meetings of teachers out of school to plot ways of obtaining more power over policy. In any of these cases, such events present evidence that organizational training could be helpful in directing such deviant behavior toward useful goals. Deviant behavior can usually be treated as a richness of resource rather than a danger about to become uncontrollable.

To understand the potentialities of a school district for effective change, interveners must know the nature, distribution, and accessibility of deviant and innovative behavior in the system. First steps in moving the school to a new level of adaptability would be to communicate varieties of deviant and innovative behaviors within the school to members who don't yet know about them. Later, it should be possible for a school to set up organizational devices for fostering and trying out alternative processes, at least in the form of role-playing or "walking through." For such an approach to increase the accessibility of deviant and innovative practice, it would be necessary for the school to adapt a new practice for an extended period and often enough so that a sufficient number of staff perceive the practice as actually stemming from the formal trials. Through such a procedure, the first steps in constructing a self-renewing school organization are under way. A major objective of organizational training with schools should be to help

the school develop procedures for searching out innovative practices both within and outside itself.

But schools must move farther than this if they are to benefit from the emerging variety pool. A set of selective criteria is necessary for accepting new ideas for trial and rejecting others. Sometimes this screening gets done by the business manager because of his spending habits, or sometimes through argument within an administrative committee; however, the procedures are often not clear to others in the school. Usually the criteria for selecting new ideas are ambiguous, or known only to a few, or both. If the criteria are vague, innovations may work at cross-purposes to one another--such as new procedures for counseling the slow learner together with a tract system of grouping in academic classes that results in frustration for the slower student.

Organizational training would aim at developing a shared set of criteria for screening innovations, explicit and consciously known to persons functioning as parts of the decision-making subsystem. This clarity should pervade the school so that others who are not directly parts of the decision-making subsystem can obtain further information easily.

An adaptive school must also have arrangements for preserving and propagating successful innovations. Many teaching innovations are never communicated beyond the walls of the originating classroom or school. Schools often do not have norms to legitimize continuing an innovation. Even when such norms are present, many schools do not have formalized mechanisms through which communication can occur about the varieties of innovation within the school. Organizational training should be aimed at helping schools invent ways of legitimizing and mobilizing the sharing of innovations going on within.

as open systems

Organizational training must take into consideration the openness of a school to

its environment. Such an analysis includes the receptivity of the system to inputs from the community and the influence of the system on its community. Being open means using information from the community to guide interaction with the environment in such a way as to make goal-seeking more efficient. An organization is closed when it has no mechanism for recognizing a particular type of input or by having no channel for routing information to a point where it can be dealt with as feedback and used to guide adaptive modification of internal processes. Even if a school has a large variety pool, it will run into difficulties with self-renewal if it is closed to its environment.

For example, a school is open toward feelings of parents if it provides some sort of listening activity at the end of a channel from parents, has a mechanism for converting the listening activity into an act of selecting a new procedure from the variety pool, and some way of monitoring the input from parents when the new procedure is put into effect. A school is open to information about children's hunger if it has ways of listening and observing symptoms, if it has a cafeteria or other device for furnishing food, if it has a mechanism for getting the food to hungry students, and a way of observing the results of putting the food and the hungry student together. A school is open to evaluative information from the superintendent if it has one or more informational channels from the superintendent, a way of using the information to select a new process from the variety pool, and a way of monitoring the effect of the new procedure upon the evaluative information from the superintendent.

An attribute of openness to the environment would not be of such concern to organizational development in schools if the environment were stable and static. But just the opposite condition appears to prevail in contemporary society. Community environments in general have become much more complex. The inevitable effect on schools is toward more complexity of function--both internally and at the boundary. Many school districts have been forced to add numerous administrators to handle this increased complexity. The need for schools to be able to respond quickly to increasing environmental complexity is great. School staffs often are pushed and pulled by forces they are unable to control. The resulting role strains and personal frustrations undermine the quality of education. Organizational training proposes to make substantial

improvements in the school's responsiveness to its environment by helping it modify its internal features, including its roles and norms, and to become more self-renewing.

internal features of schools

When diagnosing the organizational condition of a school, the intervener makes repeated use of the concepts of norm and role. (see Katz and Kahn, 1966; Likert, 1961; and McGregor, 1967). Norms within the school organization provide its structure and coherence. The members of the staff of a school behave in patterned, predictable ways because their behaviors are guided by common expectations, attitudes, and understandings. Norms are especially serviceable and tenacious when individual staff members intrinsically value the normative behavior in the school or when they perceive such behavior as instrumental in reaching other valued goals. In any case, norms are strong stabilizers of organizational behavior. As we pointed out earlier in this paper, it is the strength of shared expectations or attitudes about how to behave that makes behaviors in a school organization so resistant to modification.

Roles are the bundles of functions that individual staff members (organizational components) carry out in their positions in the organization. These sets of functions or working activities are patterned and regular primarily because they are guided by organizational norms. Administrators, teachers, and students behave in predictable ways because each expects the other to do so. In brief, interacting participants within the school find their behaviors guided by the normative processes of the organization.

We assume that role-taking is always done as part of an interaction with other role-takers. If it is said that an organizational member is performing poorly in a given role, what is meant is that the interaction between him and his role reciprocators is producing a breakdown within the subsystem of their membership. In this sense, the point of any intervention for improving a subsystem is not on the person but rather on the interaction patterns linking role-

reciprocators. It would be a psychologist's fallacy to focus on the internal dynamics of only one role-taker, no matter how significant he is within the organizational structure.

We assume that the roles being taken in a school are "carried" through the interpersonal interactions between role reciprocators. Any attempt to intervene into a school, therefore, must include new ways of carrying out interpersonal interaction; further, these new procedures should be entered into by the actual role reciprocators who make the school run. Norms and roles cannot be changed in a vacuum. Changes in organizational norms and roles are most efficiently brought about and made stable by requiring staff members to behave in new ways in their actual work-group setting while, at the same time, other role-takers can observe these new behaviors. Norms will not be altered unless other relevant role-takers are allowed to see that their colleagues actually accept the new patterns of behavior in the setting of the school.

At any given moment, role-takers act as components of several subsystems of the school. While the teacher is interacting with his students in the classroom, he is simultaneously performing as part of the "producing" subsystem in the classroom and as part of the subsystem that coordinates effort among the faculty. He performs this latter function by the experiences he makes possible in his classroom and which the students will describe informally to other teachers and students, enabling the others to verify or change their expectations about the behavior of the first teacher. When the teacher is conversing with other teachers in the coffee room, he is simultaneously performing as part of the decision-making subsystem of the school and as part of the communication net--the former by agreeing with other teachers on which administrative directives they will resist or sabotage and the second perhaps by exchanging technical information about the subject-matter the teachers severally teach. Each subsystem membership calls for individuals to interact in mutual interdependence and reciprocal role-relations. These subsystems, especially when they are face-to-face and intimate, require more detailed norms than does the school district at large. The norms of subsystems include methods for work, interpersonal values, and social-emotional customs. Each semi-permanent, face-to-face work group within a school district rewards certain manners

of speech, behaviors, gestures, etc., and not others; it also approves certain topics for discussion and not others. In these face-to-face subsystems, individual differences in emotionality become important, sometimes crucially so. Especially important to the small face-to-face group are individual abilities referred to as interpersonal competencies or skills. Alterations of some interpersonal patterns can be guided by formal changes, but sometimes patterns of interpersonal interactions that deeply involve the egos of the participants can be changed only through the same process by which they are maintained--through new one-to-one actions supported by other members of the subsystem and legitimized through the formation of new intra-group norms.

Because we believe that man's rational and emotional sides are inextricably mingled, we believe also that an organizational intervention can be successful only if it adequately takes account of man's emotional experience. Substantial research evidence shows that men invest emotion in at least three domains: (1) striving toward achievement, also labeled curiosity, exploration, or activity, (2) affiliation, also delineated by some as the interpersonal dimension of love, indifference, and hostility, and (3) influence or power, also described as the dimension of dominance-submission.

We assume that all interpersonal relations and the motivations concomitant with them can be construed as having achievement, affiliation, and influence components. Emotional experiences can become problems when any one of these motivational states is frustrated. Typical emotions noted in our observations of schools resulting from frustrations of these motivations are feelings of inferiority, worthlessness, being put down, loneliness, betrayal, lack of interest, and dullness. These feelings, in turn, prevent staff members from making maximum use of their potentials as role-takers. Although it is impossible to arrange human affairs to eliminate emotional frustrations, it seems possible to bring about organizational norms and procedures in schools that will mobilize emotional states for productive ends and make it more likely that the work of the school will flow more smoothly.

Feelings in the area of achievement or self-accomplishment can be harnessed productively when staff members of a

school have a clear conception of one another's goals. Ambiguity about expected outcomes is usually more emotionally frustrating than being in conflict over goals. In the latter instance, persons on a school staff can gain security by realizing where they stand in relation to others. Ambiguity, however, reduces the likelihood that feelings will be associated with a clear referent; consequently, the frustrated person cannot easily find a way out of his frustration. Affiliative feelings can be gratified through building a cohesive unit in which staff members find friendliness and the reciprocal exchange of support and warmth. Feelings having to do with power can be satisfied through the organization's allowing for influence at all levels. Such a dispersion of influence will facilitate the open expression of frustration over being placed in a submissive or dominated relation to others. (Then, too, some persons become anxious when they find themselves in a position of dominance.) All emotional states are potentially harnessed through taking a problem-solving orientation to organizational life in the schools.

The sociological concepts of norm and role, along with the psychological variables of emotional styles, should guide organizational training interventions. We think that the following goals for organizational training grow out of our theory. These serve as objectives as we intervene in a school district to improve its organizational functioning:

1. Increase understanding of how people in different parts of the school affect one another,
2. Develop clear communication networks up and down and laterally,
3. Increase understanding of the various educational goals in different parts of the school,
4. Develop new ways of solving problems through creative use of new roles in groups,
5. Develop new ways of assessing progress toward educational goals in the school,
6. Involve more people at all levels in decision-making,
7. Develop procedures for searching out innovative practices both within and outside the school.

sequence for intervening with organizational training

The achievement of these seven objectives depends upon an effective strategy for altering organizational processes in the school. We believe that the following three stages represent a prototypic strategy for bringing into operation a more self-renewing school.

Stage 1: Improving Communication Skills

Functions within schools, as in all other organizations, are "carried" through interpersonal interactions (McGregor, 1967). Typically, human beings in organizations lack skill in *communicating clearly and succinctly*. The first phase of organizational training, while helping the faculty of a school increase its discussions about interpersonal or inter-role problems, can most effectively do so while simultaneously practicing new ways of communicating. The first step, then, is to build increased openness and ease of interpersonal communication among the faculty by training them in the skills of paraphrasing, describing behavior, describing own feelings, and checking their perceptions of others' feelings. The intervention aims to develop skillful, constructive openness; by doing so, it will help the staff develop increased confidence that communication can have worthwhile outcomes.

Stage 2: Changing Norms

After increasing communication skills, the next step is to attempt to build new norms that support interpersonal openness and helpfulness on the staff (Argyris, 1964). In seeking a lever with which to change group norms, we can use the desires of the staff to ameliorate some of their actual problems. For example, we can invite the faculty to state some frustrations that they are encountering in the school and to practice a sequence of problem-solving steps to reduce these frustrations. An activity like this one can lead to reduced frustrations and to the satisfaction of knowing that others value the contribution one has made to organizational problem-solving. Changes in organizational norms of openness and candor can occur because staff members are required to behave in new ways in

their actual work-groups, while their fellow colleagues can observe these new patterns of behavior in the setting of the school.

Stage 3: Structural Change

The culminating phase of any organizational training should build new functions, roles, procedures, or policies (Katz and Kahn, 1966). The new structures should become part of the basic fabric of the school organization. They should be formal and institutionalized with budgetary support. Presently, we are testing the efficacy of a cadre of "communication consultants" established as one part of our intervention, so that the training that first enters the system from the outside later becomes part of the internal structure for self-renewal.

example of internal structure for self-renewal

The objectives listed above and the suggested sequence of training require a process of continuous readjustment within the school district. To achieve self-renewal, any intervention should develop, among other new roles, special roles for continuously monitoring organizational problems and for recurrently training the school district's subparts in effective articulation. We hope the role of communication consultant, mentioned above, will serve these functions.

Communication consultants, in our current version, are drawn from the professional staff of a school district and from a variety of positions. They receive training that enables them to help members of the school district achieve the seven objectives stated above. The communication consultants act in this capacity only part-time, at other times carrying out regular professional roles in the school district. Communication consultants might be classroom teachers, principals, counselors, assistant superintendents, etc. We require, however, that a communication consultant not perform this function in the building or other unit in which his main job is located. This cadre of communication consultants constitutes an organizational sub-structure for

self-renewal that has connections to many other subsystems and is arranged to respond flexibly to organizational problems wherever they might arise in a school district.

A number of organizational sub-processes constitute the focal points for interventions by communication consultants. In general, communication consultants attempt to produce a lively ability for organizational problem-solving by following these guides:

1. Communication consultants should first judge the sorts of discrepancies that exist between the school's goals and its actual organizational performance. Some features to be diagnosed are: (a) the school's current level of tension in relation to achieving its goals, (b) the possible directions that the school might move in achieving its goals, (c) the goals that are or are not being achieved, (d) the problem-solving processes that the school uses to cope with discrepancies, and (e) the ways that the school now checks to see if it is achieving its goals.
2. Communication consultants should assess the level of role clarity in the school. The important features are (a) sufficiently promulgated definition and support from the school district's administration (central office), (b) adequate level of confidence in the role-performance of others vis-a-vis oneself, and (c) sufficiently understood roles of others in distant parts of the school so that the entire organization can be perceived as an organization to which one sees that he belongs in a meaningful way.
3. The communication consultant should pay attention to the flow of communication in the school organization. Almost inevitably, malfunctioning in a school will show itself in weakened and distorted communication at crucial links. In contrast, schools that undergo successful organizational training evince continuing formalized activities for improving communication. Communication consultants should diagnose a school's attempts to improve its communication by checking to see if new forms of communication remain reasonably stable, to see if more than just a few staff members get involved in the new mode of communication,

and to see if there is agreement in the school that the new form is legitimate and that it helps the staff to accomplish its goals.

4. Communication consultants should assess the extent to which the school has a repertoire of interpersonal techniques for collaboration in small task-groups. They should assess the success of staff members in performing communication skills such as paraphrasing, describing one another's behaviors objectively without imputing motives, and expressing their own feelings openly and constructively.
5. Communication consultants should assess to what extent a variety pool is available for producing new and appropriate ways of solving organizational problems. Neither people nor organizations take on a new way of behaving merely because someone conceives of the new mode. Formalized ways for adopting new patterns must be present; the variety pool, if it is to be effective, must represent a capability for organized action. It must be institutionalized and rewarding.

To locate the variety pool in schools, the communication consultants should look for recently altered interrelations of roles, the diverse ways of transmitting information present in the school, commitments of man-hours to temporary projects, the variety of choices and classroom innovations actually being tried out, and the like. Often new activities in schools take the form of committee work, curricular alterations, financial changes, alterations in schedules, procedural innovations at meetings or finding new roles for students or new jobs for the faculty. An important evidence of an active variety pool in a school is the practice of new forms without prior approval of administrators, at least up to the point of disruption of existing routines. Further, in seeking possible new contributions to the variety pool, the communication consultants should look at the deviant behavior in the school and assess its potential for being converted to constructive use.

6. Communication consultants should assess to what extent the school contains means for selecting some innovative activities to

be maintained in the variety pool and means for rejecting others. The school should have a method for deciding whether any proposed innovation points sufficiently close to a goal to justify keeping the innovation in readiness for use. Significant individuals in the school should be able to verbalize goals in ways with which others would agree. Norms in the school should support continuous comparisons between expressed goals and the implications of current action, and committees should exist for deciding what is to be done about the lack of matching between expressed goals and proposed ways of doing things. Communication consultants should insist on clearer statements of goals, should help convene frequent conferences of a problem-solving type to seek ways of bringing current action into harmony with goals, and should suggest "trial runs" of new organizational forms for bringing about an understandable correspondence between the variety pool and proclaimed goals.

7. Communication consultants should assess to what extent the school has a method for institutionalizing an innovation after it has been judged suitable and worth keeping. Organizational training that helps a faculty to search its own members for useful resources will create a school in which the staff members invent their own methods of maintaining an accessible variety pool. A variety pool will probably be more accessible when the distribution of power in a faculty is more equalized. Conscious modes of maintaining innovations will be more likely to appear after training that gives practice in using feedback-loops and in seeking evidence of successful innovations.

some skills and actions

of communication consultants

Some examples of skills useful to communication consultants and examples of actions they can take to disseminate the skills to others are summarized below. The goals for organizational training are repeated and the relevant skills and actions follow each goal.

1. Increase understanding of how people in different parts of the total school system affect one another.

Skills: collecting data using questionnaires, interviews, and observations, etc.

Actions: setting up feedback sessions within the school, etc.

2. Develop clear communication networks up and down and laterally.

Skills: using communication skills such as paraphrasing, behavior description, etc.

Actions: arranging for communication-skills workshops within the school, etc.

3. Increase understanding of the various educational goals in different parts of the school organization.

Skills: writing behavioral objectives and specifying outcomes using operational definitions, etc.

Actions: collaborating with appropriate specialists in bringing various groups in the district together to discuss objectives, etc.

4. Develop new ways of solving problems through creative use of new roles in groups.

Skills: using several problem-solving sequences with groups, etc.

Actions: training various groups in the school district to use conscious routines of group problem-solving. Groups such as department heads, committees, team

teaching, and departmental units could receive such training.

5. Develop new ways of assessing progress toward educational goals in the school.

Skills: seeking technical assistance from researchers on ways of collecting evaluative data, etc.

Actions: collaborating with workshops systems analysis (for example) and with the teachers' associations.

6. Involve more people at all levels in decision-making.

Skills: using communication skills for increasing participation in small groups and using organizational confrontations for reducing unproductive distance between hierarchical levels, etc.

Actions: diagnosing influence processes from own vantage point in the district, sharing these diagnoses, and developing plans for involving others in constructive problem-solving, etc.

7. Develop procedures for searching out innovative practices both within and outside the school.

Skills: observing for frustrations and dissatisfactions in the school wherever goals are not being reached and identifying creative practices wherever they are occurring, etc.

Actions: setting up meetings to help bring together the frustrated and the creative, whether the latter be inside or outside the district, etc.

SUMMARY

Organizational training aims at increasing the effectiveness in problem-solving of groups as task-oriented entities. It attempts to help participants to function more effectively as components of working bodies carrying out specific tasks in that particular job setting. Unlike sensitivity training, it does not aim at helping individuals to understand themselves better or to help them be more skillful in personal relationships generally. This paper outlines a theory to guide organizational training in schools.

Two theoretical perspectives are employed in this paper--general systems theory and group-dynamics theory. From the former perspective, school organizations are viewed as open, living systems consisting of subsystems that require articulation with one another. They are goal-directed, adaptable, and contain many more resources than are normally used. Schools have multiple and differentiated processes that are constantly in motion. One key to effective change lies in the school's capacity to do things in new ways--in its internal variety pool. A variety pool is a distribution of readiness for varieties of action. An adaptive school must have procedures for accepting new ideas for trial and for preserving those innovations that are successful.

Following group-dynamics theory, our analysis makes repeated use of the concepts of norm and role. It is the strength of shared expectations or attitudes about how to behave that makes behaviors in a school organiza-

tion so resistant to modification. At the same time, if any change is to be viable, changes in norms and roles must occur within the school organization. We assume that roles being taken in a school are carried through the interpersonal interactions between role-reciprocators. We also assume that all interpersonal relations and the motivations concomitant with them can be construed as having achievement, affiliation, and influence components and their accompanying emotions. It is important, then, in any attempt to modify roles and norms, to take into consideration the emotional reactions of participants. Organizational training attempts to harness emotional states by taking a problem-solving orientation to group life in the school. Seven objectives for intervening in a school district are derived from the theory. The rest of the paper focuses on ways of achieving these seven objectives through organizational training.

A three-step sequence for intervening in schools with organizational training is proposed: (1) improving communication skills, (2) changing norms, and (3) structural changes. We are testing, as one sort of structural change, the efficacy of a cadre of "communication consultants" within a school district to use organizational training on a continuous basis. These communication consultants will attempt to produce a lively ability for organizational problem-solving and will constitute an organizational sub-structure for self-renewal. The paper ends by discussing some specific strategies, skills, and actions for the communication consultants.

REFERENCES

- Argyris, C. Integrating the Individual and the Organization. New York: Wiley, 1964.
- Bradford, L. P., Gibb, J. R., and Benne, K. D. T-group Theory and Laboratory Method. New York: Wiley, 1964.
- Buckley, W. Sociology and Modern Systems Theory. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1967.
- Campbell, J. P., and Dunnette, M. D. "Effectiveness of T-group Experiences in Managerial Training and Development." Psychological Bulletin 70: 1968, pp. 73-104.
- Harrison, R. "Cognitive Changes and Participation in a Sensitivity Training Laboratory." Journal of Consulting Psychology, 30: 1966, p. 6.
- Katz, D. and Kahn, R. The Social Psychology of Organizations. New York: Wiley, 1966.
- Kuriloff, A. H. and Atkins, S. "T-group for a Work Team." Journal of Applied Behavioral Science 2: 1966, pp. 63-93.
- Likert, R. New Patterns of Management. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1961.
- McGregor, D. The Professional Manager. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967.